

President/CEO's Report

Housing Authority Of The City Of Orlando, Florida
Vivian Bryant, Esq., President/CEO
Ed Carson, Chair

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DESK

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- HDLI Spring Conference
Washington, D.C.
May 15-16, 2014
- PHADA's Annual Convention and Exhibition
New Orleans, LA
June 1-4, 2014
- SERC-NAHRO Annual Conference
Orlando, FL
June 15-17, 2014



VIVIAN BRYANT, ESQ.
PRESIDENT/CEO

HISTORY OF PUBLIC HOUSING 4th Edition

I am fascinated by the history of public housing in the United States. In the January 2014's edition on the President/CEO Report, we learned that the concept of public housing began in the late nineteenth century. There was a need to build affordable housing for ship builders during the period when war ships were built. Two housing programs responded to this need: The Public Works Administration (PWA) and the United States Housing Act of 1937 was a major legislation: (1) it created the United States Housing Authority to provide management, financial and technical assistance, and (2) it authorized the States to pass enabling legislation to create housing authorities. The One program provided low interest loans and the other provided funds for the

redevelopment of communities including the clearance of slum and blight. The first two (2) public housing developments in Florida were Durkeeville in Jacksonville and Liberty Square in Miami. We see the beginnings of the separation of the Departments of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development: the public housing side and the community development side. During the 1920s and 30s, the architectural themes included the Super Bloc plan in original street grids were abandoned when vehicular traffic reached the public housing sites. There was no vehicular traffic on site. Common areas included green space and playgrounds.

The next phase is reprinted from a report prepared for the Orlando Housing Authority by Janus Research entitled "Historic Resources Survey and Evaluation for Carver Court.

"...following the Public Works Administration (PWA) programs, the United States Housing Authority (USHA) limited the funds allocated for housing projects. Therefore, in the 1940s standardized plans were increasingly used. Cost efficient materials and designs were encouraged rather than new designs for each housing project. Consequently, USHA's requirements resulted in housing projects that laced extraneous aesthetic embellishment, yet they still exemplified the modern architectural trends of the time period (Robinson et al 1999: Volume II, Page 45).

With the United States increased involvement in World War II, the responsibilities of USHA were shifted to primarily support the national war effort. Later legislation such as the National Defense Act of 1940, determined that USHA and the local housing authorities were to work with the Navy and War Departments to build housing for military personnel and civilians employed by military installations (Robinson et al 1999: Volume II, Page 47). Later, in 1940, another piece of legislation, the Lanham Act, was passed. The Lanham Act provided \$150 million to the Federal Works Administration to build large numbers of housing units in the congested defense industry centers. The Lanham Act encouraged the federally built housing to be produced quickly and cheaply (Robinson et al 1999: Volume II, Page 52)...."

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2014 Strawberry Festival Trip

Friday, March 6, 2014, residents from the Orlando Housing Authority traveled to the Strawberry Festival held in Plant City, Florida. They learned about the many uses of strawberries. There were exhibits, woodwork and rope making demonstrations, free musical entertainment, fresh strawberries, strawberry shortcake, etc. They also learned about the production of strawberries and vegetables in the State of Florida. The residents enjoyed this educational trip; they had a great time and were able to purchase souvenirs and strawberries.



Hampton Park Spring Fiesta 2014



Tuesday, March 11, 2014 the Hampton Park Resident Association held its 2014 Spring Fiesta in the Matilde Roman Center from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. Thirteen (13) Hampton Park residents attended the activity and enjoyed a relaxing afternoon the included socializing with neighbors, dancing and a delicious lunch. The following OHA staff facilitated the event: ROSS Service Coordinator, Joe. DeJesus, the Site Manager, Lillian Collado and the Maintenance Technician, Luis Montañez.



Board of Commissioners' Meeting

The Orlando Housing Authority Board of Commissioners will hold its Board Meeting, Thursday, April 17, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at the OHA's Administration Building, Board Room, 390 N. Bumby Avenue, Orlando, FL 32803.

Orlando Housing Authority residents interested in attending the meeting who need transportation, and/or have special needs, please call the Community Affairs and Communications Department at (407) 895-3300, extension 6100.



ORLANDO HOUSING AUTHORITY



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HUD's Mission Statement: To promote adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity and a suitable living environment free from discrimination.

Orlando Housing Authority Mission Statement: To offer a choice of safe and affordable housing options and opportunities for economic independence for residents of Orlando and Orange County.

FAIR HOUSING CORNER

HISTORY OF FAIR HOUSING

On April 11, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which was meant as a follow-up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The 1968 act expanded on previous acts and prohibited discrimination concerning the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, sex, (and as amended) handicap and family status. Title VIII of the Act is also known as the Fair Housing Act (of 1968).

The enactment of the federal Fair Housing Act on April 11, 1968 came only after a long and difficult journey. From 1966-1967, Congress regularly considered the fair housing bill, but failed to garner a strong enough majority for its passage. However, when the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson utilized this national tragedy to urge for the bill's speedy Congressional approval. Since the 1966 open housing marches in Chicago, Dr. King's name had been closely associated with the fair housing legislation. President Johnson viewed the Act as a fitting memorial to the man's life work, and wished to have the Act passed prior to Dr. King's funeral in Atlanta.

Another significant issue during this time period was the growing casualty list from Vietnam. The deaths in Vietnam fell heaviest upon young, poor African-American and Hispanic infantrymen. However, on the home front, these men's families could not purchase or rent homes in certain residential developments on account of their race or national origin. Specialized organizations like the NAACP, the GI Forum and the National Committee Against Discrimination In Housing lobbied hard for the Senate to pass the Fair Housing Act and remedy this inequity. Senators Edward Brooke and Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts argued deeply for the passage of this legislation. In particular, Senator Brooke, the first African-American ever to be elected to the Senate by popular vote, spoke personally of his return from World War II and inability to provide a home of his choice for his new family because of his race.

With the cities rioting after Dr. King's assassination, and destruction mounting in every part of the United States, the words of President Johnson and Congressional leaders rang the Bell of Reason for the House of Representatives, who subsequently passed the Fair Housing Act. Without debate, the Senate followed the House in its passage of the Act, which President Johnson then signed into law.

The power to appoint the first officials administering the Act fell upon President Johnson's successor, Richard Nixon. President Nixon tapped then Governor of Michigan, George Romney, for the post of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. While serving as Governor, Secretary Romney had successfully campaigned for ratification of a state constitutional provision that prohibited discrimination in housing. President Nixon also appointed Samuel Simmons as the first Assistant Secretary for Equal Housing Opportunity.

When April 1969 arrived, HUD could not wait to celebrate the Act's 1st Anniversary. Within that inaugural year, HUD completed the Title VIII Field Operations Handbook, and instituted a formalized complaint process. In truly festive fashion, HUD hosted a gala event in the Grand Ballroom of New York's Plaza Hotel. From across the nation, advocates and politicians shared in this marvelous evening, including one of the organizations that started it all -- the National Committee Against Discrimination In Housing.

In subsequent years, the tradition of celebrating Fair Housing Month grew larger and larger. Governors began to issue proclamations that designated April as "Fair Housing Month," and schools across the country sponsored poster and essay contests that focused upon fair housing issues. Regional winners from these contests often enjoyed trips to Washington, DC for events with HUD and their Congressional representatives.

Under former Secretaries James T. Lynn and Carla Hills, with the cooperation of the National Association of Homebuilders, National Association of Realtors, and the American Advertising Council these groups adopted fair housing as their theme and provided "free" billboard space throughout the nation. These large 20-foot by 14-foot billboards placed the fair housing message in neighborhoods, industrial centers, agrarian regions and urban cores. Every region also had its own celebrations, meetings, dinners, contests and radio-television shows that featured HUD, state and private fair housing experts and officials. These celebrations continue the spirit behind the original passage of the Act, and are remembered fondly by those who were there from the beginning.

Source: hud.org